

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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TRANSPORTATION IS AVAILABLE FOR "SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS" DINNER

INDIANAPOLIS—With just a few days from Christmas remaining, State Rep. Vernon G. Smith (D-Gary) reminded residents of Gary, New Chicago, Lake Station, and Hobart that transportation is available for the "Spirit of Christmas" Dinner.

To reserve a ride, call Dr. Smith at his home number, (219) 887-2046, or his office, (219) 980-7120.

Those in need of assistance and senior citizens, as well as those who are lonely and unable to celebrate the holiday season with family or friends, are invited to the dinner, which will take place 1-4 p.m. at the Ivy Tech Gary Campus building at 1440 E. 35th Avenue.

Dr. Smith said volunteers are still needed for setup and cleanup.

"We are always blessed with volunteers to assist with the Dinner," said Dr. Smith. "Our real need is for more volunteers to help with the preparation for the Dinner and with cleanup the day after Christmas. These are our greatest needs. I would like to thank in advance all those who take time out of their holiday to help in the 'Spirit of Christmas' Dinner. They truly have found the meaning of the season when they offer the gift of their time and love to their brothers and sisters who are sincerely in need of a good meal and warm companionship."

Dr. Smith said there will be enough food to feed 500 people. This is the 18th year for the event, hosted by Dr. Smith, Joyce Washington-Price, Dwight Pointer, and Gelone Broadnax.

In addition to arranging for bus transportation, one can make dinner reservations or volunteer to help, by telephoning Dr. Smith at home, (219) 887-2046, or call his office, (219) 980-7120.

The dinner is a memorial to Dr. Smith's mother, the Rev. Julia E. Smith, former pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, and Patricia Tillotson, who was an educator in the Gary School Corporation system. Ms. Tillotson also was a dedicated volunteer for the "Spirit of Christmas" Dinner as well as many other charitable causes. Rev. Smith passed away 14 years ago. Ms. Tillotson died in 1997.

Dr. Smith and Dwight Pointer began the "Spirit of Christmas" Dinner tradition in response to a need they found in the community.

-30-

This release can be accessed on the Internet at www.IN.gov/H14

